

Message Text

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AMCONSUL QUEBEC

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT, CA
SUBJECT: CHOQUETTE RECOMMENDS NEW POLITICAL PARTY

1. JEROME CHOQUETTE, RECENTLY RESIGNED QUEBEC
CABINET MINISTER AND LIBERAL PARTY MEMBER, WHO HAS BEEN
INSISTING HE WOULD NOT REVEAL HIS POLITICAL INTENTIONS UNTIL
HIS SPEECH AT THE CHAMBRE DE COMMERCE ON NOVEMBER 11, FAILED
TO DO SO IN ANY SPECIFIC SENSE THEN.

2. AT THE END OF AN OVER-LONG DISCOURSE ON THE SOCIAL AND
POLITICAL NEEDS OF QUEBEC AND HOW THE PRESENT GOVERNMENT IS
OR IS NOT MEETING THEM, CHOQUETTE CAME TO THE CONCLUSION THAT
THE PEOPLE OF THE PROVINCE NEED AN ALTERNATIVE TO THE
LIBERAL PARTY AND THE PARTI QUEBECOIS, AND URGED THAT ALL
LIKE-MINDED MEN AND WOMEN JOIN IN SUCH A MOVEMENT.
SIGNIFICANTLY, HOWEVER, HE DID NOT STATE EXPLICITLY THAT
HE WOULD HEAD SUCH AN ACTIVITY OR NAME ANY IMMEDIATE
"PARTNERS" SUCH AS FABIAN ROY (RECENTLY EXPELLED FROM THE
SOCIAL CREDIT PARTY FOR SUPPORTING SUCH AN IDEA) OR MAURICE
BELLEMARE OF THE UNION NATIONALE, DESPITE THE RECENT PUBLICITY
ABOUT HIS "NEGOTIATING" WITH THEM. HE DID ANNOUNCE THAT THE
NEW ORGANIZATION SHOULD BE CALLED THE "PARTI NATIONALE,"
BECAUSE IT WOULD BE TOO DIFFICULT TO PERSUADE LIBERALS AND
PEQUISTES TO JOIN AN OLD PARTY" -- I.E., THE UNION NATIONALE.
BELLEMARE PROMPTLY ANNOUNCED THAT HIS PARTY "IS NOT GOING TO
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DISAPPEAR."

3. EARLY MEDIA REACTION, AND THERE WAS EXTENSIVE IN-PLACE COVERAGE, WAS RATHER HO-HUM, AS WAS THAT OF THE AUDIENCE WHICH HAD CLEARLY EXPECTED SOMETHING MORE SPECTACULAR. AT NO POINT WAS HE INTERRUPTED BY APPLAUSE AND THERE WAS AN OBVIOUS LET-DOWN AT THE ANTICLIMATIC FINISH.

4. COMMENT: CHOQUETTE LAID A GREAT DEAL OF EMPHASIS IN HIS SPEECH ON THE UNIQUE CHARACTER OF QUEBEC AS A FRENCH ENCLAVE IN NORTH AMERICA. THIS IS NOT APT TO WIN HIM MANY SUPPORTERS AMONG THE ANGLOPHONES (INCLUDING THOSE BILINGUALS IN THE AUDIENCE), THOUGH HE PAID A LARGE AND WELCOMING LIP-SERVICE TO THEM IN OTHER PARTS OF HIS TALK WHICH EMPHASIZED HIS "FEDERALISM". IT IS ALSO UNLIKELY THAT HE HAS FURTHERED ANY PROVINCIAL POLITICAL ASPIRATIONS WITH THIS OVER-TOUTED-IN-ADVANCE BUT WAFFLING SPEECH, ALTHOUGH THIS COULD BE OVERCOME LATER.

5. COPIES, AVAILABLE ONLY IN FRENCH, ARE BEING POUCHED TO EUR/CAN, INR, AND POSTS ON THIS CABLE'S DISTRIBUTION.

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